

ECFS - Email Filing

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<DATE>02/08/2005

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<TEXT>I do not think it appropriate that once again the government wants to make the working and middle class families pay more so that the wealthy businesses don't have to. We had to drop our long distance service several years ago because it was too expensive. Where we live, anyone who has a different phone company is long distance, even my neighbor next door, 20 feet away. Our local service alone is \$100 a month to cover the long distance within the St. Louis area. When we had long distance service for out of area calls, that was usually another \$100 or more a month. After going several months without long distance at all, we discovered the AT&T phone cards, and we were able to call out of town relatives once again. I can not afford to pay more for my telephone service!

Now, you are after my cell phone as well!! My daughter is home alone after school and I have a 50 minute drive home, and without my cell phone she can't get hold of either my husband or I without it. Basic cell phone service costs \$30 or more a month here, and I don't need 300 minutes a month, I only use about 60 minutes. To be blunt, I don't have \$30 more to spend on top of my \$100 local service. My tracfone costs me about \$10 a month, and I never call long distance on it. Why do I have to give up my cell phone and my daughter's safety, so some business can make a higher profit? I urge you to reject a flat fee proposal that would change how contributions are made to the Universal Service Fund. I know that this proposal could make my current service unaffordable.

Under the flat fee proposal you are considering, people who make few long distance calls would pay the same as people or businesses that make many calls. In other words, low-volume and primarily residential customers would bear the same universal service fund burden as a high-volume residential or business customers. This is unfair!

I use my wireless phone for safety, security and convenience. I don't want to lose these benefits so that big businesses can pay less than their fair share. I urge you to reject the proposal to move the USF collection system to a flat-fee.

Keep the USF Fair!

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Brands
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